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About the northern limit of the distribution of *Agrodiaetus damon* ([DENIS & SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775) in Europe

(Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae)

by

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Agrodiaetus damon ([DENIS & SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775) is a widely distributed species. In Europe it is local and its distribution is limited by 52° N. Populations of this species are connected with the distribution of the food plants - *Onobrychis* species (HIGGINS & RILEY, 1970).

In N. and N.-W. Europe only two such populations were known: one population in Shkaune (Latvia) and the second one near Izborsk (Pskov Region of Russia) 180 km to the North from the first (SULCS & VIIDALEPP, 1974). In the Scandinavian countries and in Denmark this species is absent (SVENSSON et al., 1994). Thus, the Izborsk population is northernmost population according to literature data. Besides that in literature were indications on the presence of this species in the environment of Luga (Leningrad Region of Russia). *A. damon* was found here for the first time by BLOECKER (1897). FRIDOLIN caught this species in 1921-1922 near Luga (DJAKONOV, 1968).

The next finding was done by A. MATOV more than 70 years after FRIDOLIN's collections in the end of July 1996 during the investigation of the western environs of Luga. The collecting site is a dry hilly locality with low sparse forest. *Onobrychis arenaria* is common here, mainly along roads and on slopes. The flying butterfies of *A. damon* have been observed over flowering *Onobrychis* plants. From 28.-31.VII.1996 8 males and 3 females were collected by A. MATOV. That is approximately one third of the observed specimens of this species. In the middle of August of 1996 *A. damon* was still abundant but in the end of August only single specimens were found. In 1997 A. MATOV and A. IVANOV continued their investigations of this territory from the middle of May to the middle of August. The flight period of *A. damon* in 1997 was from the middle of July until the middle of August. The frequency of this species in 1997 was approximately the same as in 1996. The borders of the distribution of *A. damon* in this place were defined in 1997: 3 km from the West to the East and 3.5 km from the North to the South. The flying time on the labels in the collections of FRIDOLIN which were found by us in the Zoological Insitution of Russian Academy of Sciences (St.-Petersburg) is the same as in our data - Luga, 26.VII. 1921, 29.VII.1921, 16.VIII.1922, 3 ♂♂ and 1 ♀; Obla River [near Luga], 31.VII.1921, 1 ♂. A second place with *A. damon* occurring was found by us on 23.VII.1997 near Krupeli Village, 4.5 km to the North of the first place. Only 3 specimens of *A. damon* were collected here near single plants of *Onobrychis arenaria* - 1 ♂ and 2 ♀♀.

Therefore, the most northern population of *A. damon* among all the known in Europe is in Russia in the Luga District of the Leningrad Region.

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